

Commissioner's Weekly Wrap Up

DCS Communications Office

May 28, 2004

This Week In Central Office

Wednesday, May 26

Commissioner Miller conducted supervisory training in the Hamilton, South East and Upper Cumberland regions.

Thursday & Friday, May 26 & 27

Commissioner Miller and the DCS Core Leadership Team attended a two-day retreat focusing on management, leadership and morale.

The Week Ahead

Tuesday, June 1

Commissioner Miller will hold a "field visit" with Central Office staff in Nashville.

Staff Contact: Carla.Aaron@state.tn.us

Wednesday, June 2

Commissioner Miller will conduct supervisory training with the Shelby, Northwest and Southwest regions.

Staff Contact: Carla.Aaron@state.tn.us

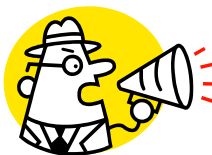


Have a Safe and Happy Memorial Day

Monday, May 31, is Memorial Day: Originally called "Decoration Day," this day of remembrance commends those who have died in service to our nation. Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, and was first observed on May 30, 1868.

Communications Update: Calling all Newsletters!

Does your region have a monthly newsletter you would like to make available on the employee intranet? Well, then, send it our way! Please email Rick.H.Mullins@state.tn.us your monthly newsletter in a word document and include your region and month in the subject line. (Ex: Southeast Region: May Newsletter)



From the Desk of Viola Miller: Building a Network of Support

Our goal of “family centered” practice has major and far-reaching implications for how we do our work. The Child and Family Team meeting (CFTM) will serve as our decision-making environment for working with families.

As all of you know, our families are very complex and rarely present with a single issue. If a child is abused, neglected, dependent or delinquent, there are family dysfunctions or needs that have created the climate in which these issues developed.

We cannot do this work alone. We know that poverty, substance abuse and family violence are all major contributors that create situations that come to the attention of DCS. If we are to truly use a strengths based, family centered practice model, the CFTM’s must include a broad array of service providers who can assist us and our families to establish a network of support. Only such a network can address the myriad of issues involved in keeping children safe in permanent nurturing homes.

We need the help of schools, mental health, health departments, adult education, food stamps workers, Families First, child support, housing experts and many others if we are to develop a family centered permanency plan. We need foster/adopt families as well as birth families at the table.

Only by taking a comprehensive approach to our families strengths and needs can we develop the network of community-based service essential to the best outcomes for our children.

Please remember that children exist as a part of families and that families exist as a part of communities. If we ignore any of the “pieces”, our families cannot become whole.

I recognize that this approach is very new to DCS and will take time to mature. We must develop networks of community partners at the local level. We must engage with other agencies as never before.

Please remember that the pay off from this systemic approach will be huge for our families and children. Community partners will “come to the table”, but we need to invite them. We must develop a positive working relationship with all those groups and agencies in our communities who care about the well being of children.

Our CFTM’s must be about more than the crises that brought a family to DCS. We must focus on the bigger and more important picture. How do we help this family develop a network of support that enables them to help their children become capable, contributing adults?

We will all be working together to realize this vision. It will not be easy to learn to involve others in problem solving. Our families and children deserve no less. Assisting families to develop networks of support allows us to share responsibility with others...to leverage community resources for our families. Above all, children will be safer and families will be stronger.



A cynic is not merely one who reads bitter lessons from the past; he is one who is prematurely disappointed in the future.

~Sydney J. Harris

The trouble with the world is that the stupid are cocksure and the intelligent are full of doubt.

~Bertrand Russell

Nothing is ever lost by courtesy. It is the cheapest of pleasures, costs nothing, and conveys much.

~Erastus Wiman

The common idea that success spoils people by making them vain, egotistic, and self-complacent is erroneous; on the contrary, it makes them, for the most part, humble, tolerant, and kind. Failure makes people cruel and bitter.

~William Somerset Maugham

The palest ink is better than the best memory.

~Chinese proverb

The minute you start talking about what you're going to do if you lose, you have lost.

~George Shultz

It is not the critic who counts, nor the man who points out where the strong man stumbled, or where a doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man in the arena whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs, and who comes up short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause. The man who at best knows the triumph of high achievement and who at worst, if he fails, fails while daring greatly, so that his place will never be with those cold timid souls who never knew victory or defeat.

~Author Unknown
